RECONCILING NATIONALISM AND STABILITY IN EURASIA

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Introduction

The rise of nation states on the territory of the former Soviet Union has produced profound change in the global order, change more significant than the demise of Soviet communism as a world ideology. The most accurate historical analogue to what is now occurring in Eurasia (1) is the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire and the construction of new states in Central Europe in the interwar years. Left to their own devices, the new Eurasian states could repeat the ethnic strife and political instability which became endemic in Central Europe in the 1920s and invited great power intervention in the 1930s. Reconciling the emergence of these states with global security and economic interdependence will be the challenge of the final decade of this century. The integration of these states into a new world order, not the demise of the Soviet Union, will mark the true conclusion of the Cold War policy of containment.

The goal of the democratic West must be to merge stability in Eurasia with the national aspirations of the peoples there. This cannot be achieved without western, particularly U.S., engagement and resources. The Bush Administration has already begun this process with the diplomatic recognition of the Soviet successor states and the extension of an official presence in these countries. So far, however, relations with these new states have been driven by immediate concerns: nuclear proliferation, the command and control of nuclear weapons inherited from the Soviet Union and the spread of Islamic fundamentalism into Central Asia.

These are genuinely urgent concerns, but the United States has a longer term interest in helping to create viable and stable national entities on the territory of the former Soviet Union. This should be the underlying theme of our policy toward Eurasia. A self-confident and democratic Russia, Ukraine and other successor states acting rationally in their national interest is the best guarantee of U.S. security in the region. That security would not be served and could well be threatened if instability in Eurasia produces conflict or a vacuum of power, encouraging intervention by or dependence on neighboring states in Europe or Asia. An equally threatening scenario would be the emergence of an authoritarian and centralized Russia that sought to reimpose control over breakaway republics of the former union. (2)

This essay argues that creating those conditions of stability is intimately tied to the future course of nationalism in Eurasia and our ability to influence and channel this force in positive directions. Little can be taken as given in the region, however: not the continued existence of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), not the current borders of successor states, nor even their number. Further dissolution of the Russian Federation is a distinct possibility in view of various independence movements in ethnic enclaves inside Russia and the efforts of Asiatic Russians to gain autonomy for Siberia. Because of the uncertainty of developments in the region, this paper will deal more with concepts than specific policy prescriptions for managing the rise of nationalism in Eurasia.

The Yugoslav Lesson

Yugoslavia was the first test of the West's ability to respond to nationalist aspirations in Eastern Europe. While responsibility for the strife which has and is continuing to consume Yugoslavia lies squarely on the shoulders of the Yugoslav peoples themselves, the West's response to these developments was uncoordinated and ineffective in acting to prevent violence and instability. With the start of the Yugoslav identity crisis in the mid-1980s, western governments fixed on the need to preserve something of the status quo (i.e., a federal or confederal Yugoslav state). To a serious degree the nationalist realities that were pulling that country apart were ignored. There was a tendency to try and convince Croats and Slovenes that a Yugoslav breakup was impractical in economic terms. Economic self-interest should, therefore, override national consciousness.

The U.S. refused to consider the option of recognizing or extending normal relations and economic support (IMF membership, etc.) should the populations of Croatia and Slovenia chose sovereignty by democratic means. In refusing seriously to weigh this option and by making that clear to the players within Yugoslavia, we may unwillingly have undercut the possibilities of an amicable settlement. Croatia and Slovenia were thereby weakened in their dealings with Serbia's non-democratic leadership. Hardliners in Belgrade were encouraged to press maximalist demands since they saw little downside in this in terms of a Western political response

should negotiations fail.

U.S. and other Western leaders did not fully appreciate that separatist sentiments in the two northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia were being fueled by the actions of Serbia's recalcitrant and unreformed communist leadership. If there was a center of gravity at which to direct pressure to retain some essence of Yugoslav unity, it should have been the republican (not federal) level in Belgrade. Some commentators have speculated that the U.S. position in holding to previous verbal commitments to Yugoslavia's "unity and territorial integrity" until late in the crisis led Serbian leaders and the Yugoslav army to misread our attitude toward the use of military force to preserve that unity. In any case, it was this military action which led to a break in Western ranks and the German decision to press ahead with recognition of the two northern republics.

There are few direct parallels between the internal developments in Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union. The constituent republics of the latter voluntarily agreed to the state's dismemberment. Nonetheless, there are lessons to be drawn in terms of a U.S. policy for dealing with the new, post-communist nationalism in Eurasia. Among them is that:

-- national (and cultural) identities matter and should be considered serious and legitimate factors in formulating policy. We ignore them at the cost of the effectiveness of that policy;

-- the failure to recognize democratically-expressed aspirations of national sovereignty can actually encourage the very violence and instability we want to avoid;

-- the newly independent peoples of Eurasia are as unlikely as the Croats and Slovenes to sacrifice sovereignty for economic wellbeing; and

-- the potential for instability and violence in post communist regimes can be reduced if the West works collectively to channel nationalistic impulses in positive directions.

Nationalism and Nation-states: part of the solution

When President Bush warned Ukrainians last summer against the "suicidal tendencies" of nationalism (3), he was articulating a deeply felt American sentiment, one that complicates our ability to understand what is now happening in Eurasia. America is not an ethnically based state. Its roots lie in the Enlightenment and our allegiance as Americans is to the principles and processes of representative government. Like the President, we are suspicious of nationalism and this skepticism was reinforced in the aftermath of Hitler's war. In the popular American mind nationalism was subordinated to a more moral and universalist ideology represented by liberal democracy and free market economy.

Emphasis on this new moral order, and the United States' central place in defending it, conditioned Americans to accept an interventionist foreign policy and a forty-five year struggle against international communism. The focus on communism, however, frequently blinded us to the importance of nationalism as a source of legitimacy and a motivator of state action elsewhere in the world. The new states of Eurasia are embracing nationalism and increasingly defining themselves in ethnic terms. To influence these new states, we will have to understand this phenomenon. (4)

To the extent Americans think of nationalism, they associate it with "we/they" relationships and with concepts of superiority or the projection of negative stereotypes to foreign groups. This is the explosive aspect of nationalism (or hyper-nationalism) that produced the great wars of this century, but it is only a part, if an ugly part, of a larger phenomenon.

West Europeans, while having experienced the dangers of hyper-nationalism, also appreciate that national feeling can give a people a sense of community and social cohesion. It can serve as a basis for the growth of a civil society, that network of political, economic and cultural relationships that supports pluralism and democracy. National consciousness was a prelude to such societies in Western Europe. Acceptance of the nation as the basic unit of governance implied that rule, if not initially by the consent of the governed, should at least be in the popular interest. As such, it was a break with an authoritarian past and

a move toward a democratic and constitutional future. (5) It is only because West Europeans feel self-confident and secure about their own nationality that they are now willing to sacrifice a degree of sovereignty to supranational institutions such as the EC.

The states of Eurasia are emerging from a Czarist and Soviet legacy of authoritarianism and imperialism. National movements in this context are not only natural, but valuable in helping these new states overcome their communist past. The popular legitimacy reflected in these movements is a basis, much as it was in Western Europe, on which to build modern, democratic states. That is not to say that there is anything automatic or inevitable about the transition of these societies to democratic government or a market economy. But the point is that without the sense of community afforded by nationalism and the nation state, individuals in these societies are unlikely to make the sacrifices required to achieve either objective.

Eurasia's New States

It is one of this century's great ironies that the ethnically-based republics created by Stalin to exert control over the nationalities of the Czarist Empire served eventually to accelerate dismemberment of the Soviet Union. Geographical units, originally meant to be no more than symbols, proved ready-made vessels into which national feeling and power could flow under conditions of "glasnost" and "perestroika." But while the populations of these former Soviet

republics have opted for "ethnic" independence, the new states themselves face serious obstacles to nation building.

Most have little, if any, experience with independence. All have inherited borders drawn by central decision in Moscow, not by history or interaction with their neighbors. They have little or no tradition in representative government. In fact, with the exception of a few democratically elected senior leaders, former communists apparatachiks predominate at all levels of government and the government structures themselves are likely to prove transitional.

Despite this, most of the former Soviet republics contain a predominant ethnic group upon which to build a nation state. (6) This fact was frequently downplayed in discussing the multi-ethnic character of the former Soviet Union. With more than 150 nationalities represented within its borders, it was common to conclude that nation-states on the West European pattern were unlikely to evolve in this ethnic diversity. Some twenty of these nationalities, however, accounted for almost 98 percent of the old union's population, with the three Slavic peoples alone representing some 70 percent. Fifteen of these nationalities have now established national homelands.

But while most of the states have an ethnic core upon which to build a nation state, they also contain sizable national minorities. These minorities provide the potential for ethnic

strife. To date ethnic violence has been limited to the periphery of the former union, particularly to the region of the Trans-caucuses, which is drifting into advanced stages of Lebanonization, and among a small number of ethnic groups in Central Asia. Traditionally good relations among many of the peoples of the former union, particularly among the Slavs, offers a hope of containing such violence. Currently the greatest threat of new violence comes from separatist movements within the Russian Federation itself, specifically from Muslim, Turkish-speaking peoples in Chechen-Ingush and Tatarstan. These are areas where dominant non-slavic populations live beside Russians as well as other minorities. They also are places, particularly in the case of Tatarstan, of vital economic significance to Russia. The Yeltsin government is now seeking to diffuse these situations by offering territorial, as opposed to ethnic, autonomy to the regions.

Three of the new successor states will be key to Eurasia's future: Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Russia's role will be central. Others already seem to be setting their political and economic agendas in reaction to what they see as Russia's ambitions and intentions. Despite a vocal, nationalist right wing, the Russians have so far been largely concerned with bread and butter issues and have eschewed traditional Russian imperialism. (7) A sign of this has been the readiness of Russian minorities to support independence referendums in other republics.

This attitude, of course, could change, particularly if it appears that Russia or the 22 million Russians living outside their new cultural homeland are being discriminated against. As scientist and social commentator Zhores Medvedev has pointed out, today's Russia is smaller and has more limited access to the sea and western Europe than at any time in its history since the 17 th century. (8) Careful management of this Russian sense of diminution will be essential to avert the rise of more aggressive nationalist feelings or resentments.

Ukraine and Kazakhstan, respectively the second largest successor states in terms of population and territory, will define the degree to which the geographic space that was once the Soviet Union retains any cohesion in political, economic or security terms. This will turn largely on the relationship these states choose to adopt with Russia. An important dynamic in these relations will be the treatment of the ethnic Russian minorities in both states. These account for the majority of expatriate Russians, many living in close proximity to the borders of the new Russia.

In contrast to Russia, an independent Ukraine is experiencing a sense of exhilaration and fulfillment after centuries of foreign domination. The advantage of Ukrainian cooperation with Russia seem self-evident to foreign observers, but the early actions of Kiev show a desire to demonstrate national autonomy in both economic and security terms. More nationalist Ukrainians seem attracted to the idea of decoupling their new state from Russia and

emphasizing cooperation with Western Europe. This go-it-alone trend is less visible in Byelorus, perhaps because of even closer cultural ties with and economic dependence on Russia.

Kazakhstan's current leaders are less likely to adopt a hyper-nationalist approach in their relations with Russia. They remain sensitive to their sovereign prerogatives, but national consciousness in Kazakhstan, and throughout Central Asia for that matter, is much less pronounced than in the more Europeanized parts of the former union. The new Kazakh state is little more than a reconstituted version of the semi-tribal relationships that ruled the republic under Soviet communism. Kazakhstan serves more as a vehicle for protecting local interests, particularly economic interests, than projecting and preserving a national identity. Kazakhstan is, in any case, highly dependent on the Russian economy and Kazahks are only slightly more numerous than Russians in their national homeland.

All of these factors may incline Kazakh leaders to negotiate a mutually beneficial and closer relationship with Russia. The alternative, a more autonomous and independent Kazakhstan bordering China and the Middle East, would be deeply threatening to Russian security interests. It could also open Kazakhstan's leadership, and that of other Central Asian states, to Islamic influences from the south, threatening the secular basis of their rule.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD EURASIA

The superpower confrontation, the defining characteristic of the post-war order, is gone. Eurasia's new states are emerging, phoenix-like, from the remains of that Cold War era. During this period the U.S. and its allies learned to temper nationalism and take a broader view of national interest. This approach was motivated by self-interest. It was tied to the need to collaborate to meet a common security threat and was encouraged by growth in a network of political and economic relations subsumed in the term "interdependence." This network created incentives for cooperation. The Eurasian states stand largely outside that network. In the absence of an external threat to their security, nationalism and national interest, more narrowly calculated, will survive as primary motivators of action for these states.

Eurasia is no longer separated from the rest of world by an Iron Curtain and instability there can no longer be compartmentalized. The region abuts the main power centers outside North America. And as the foregoing section of this paper suggests, the situation in the region is likely to be turbulent for the foreseeable future. These circumstances could fairly be used to argue in favor of caution and prudence as we develop policy and seek to influence the new states of the region. But, as Yugoslavia has shown, a policy of "wait and see" can produce its own dangers. Other states, including our European allies, see vital interests at stake in Eurasia. Therefore, Western unity is unlikely to survive without

a forward looking policy which seeks to influence events, not just responds to them.

If the driving force in Eurasia today is nationalism, managing it will require adopting practical, country-specific approaches. The number and diversity of new actors in the region will complicate the policy formulation process. We should not seek to simplify it by trying to revive the Soviet Union, either in the form of the CIS or by treating Russia as the natural spokesman for others in the region. Any inference that we are talking to Russia over their heads on issues of region wide significance will only feed the worst fears of a revival of Russian domination.

National sensitivities have already surfaced in negotiations to implement the START and CFE agreements. While leaders of the states concerned continue to voice their commitment to these arms control treaties, both Ukraine and Kazakhstan show signs of resenting solutions that anoint Russia as "the" heir to the Soviet nuclear deterrent or the bulk of its conventional arms. If both states are to cooperate in the eventual "Russification" of Soviet nuclear weapons, we may have to look to ways, such as deeper arms cuts, to take their security concerns vis-a-vis Russia into account. The U.S. initiative to open CSCE's membership to all of the Soviet successor states, and thereby preserving this territory as part of a common CSCE security space, is the sort of inclusive step that can assure Russia's new neighbors.

Treating such security concerns is not inconsistent, however, with applying a policy of differentiation in our relations with these states. This is a logical extension of the "democratic differentiation" we already practice in our relations with Eastern Europe, where the quality of our relationship and the types of assistance we are willing to extend are conditioned on a commitment to political and economic reform. Clearly some of the new successor states, but particularly Russia in view of the Yeltsin government's reform policies, are higher priority candidates for U.S. attention. Such differentiation will be understandable to the successor states themselves so long as it is linked to objective political and economic criteria.

To date U.S. attention in Eurasia has been focussed not on nationalism but on the issues of nuclear proliferation, command and control of the Soviet nuclear stockpile and the potential spread of radical, anti-Western forms of Islamic fundamentalism into Central Asia. These are serious, even urgent concerns, but we must avoid focussing on them at the expense of longer term interests. The root of our policy in the region must be the creation of underlying conditions for stability. That will require pursuing two parallel courses:

-- The first concerns coming to terms with nationalism. This means not only recognizing the new states in the region, but seeking to direct this fundamental political force, a basis of legitimacy of the modern state, in positive directions. This does

not imply actively encouraging nationalist sentiments, but it does mean showing greater receptivity to changes in the status quo when sanctioned and carried out by peaceful, democratic means. The popular legitimacy represented by nationalist movements in the region are the best basis on which to build modern, democratic successor states to the Soviet Union.

-- The second part involves giving the new Eurasian states a greater stake in global interdependence. These states need to be firmly anchored in the Western network of economic and political institutions and bound to it by ties of trade and investment. Hopefully, interdependence will expand their calculus of national interest and moderate behavior among themselves and with the outside world. After all, the last point of Kennan's containment policy argued that, once Soviet aggressive behavior had been deterred, Russia should be integrated into the wider Western political and economic system.

Former State Department Advisor Paul Gobel has pointed to three sets of problems shared by all Soviet successor states. (9) These are problems that must be resolved if these states are to survive as viable entities into the next century. The first, as Gobel explains, are the political, economic and environmental difficulties inherited from the communist system that are major obstacles to these states making the transition to democracy and a market economy. The second concerns sorting out what relations these states want with each other and the outside world.

Specifically, to what degree will this geographical space continue to have meaning in a political, economic or security sense. Third, and perhaps most sensitive of all, is the question of borders. Many of Eurasia's current frontiers reflect no ethnic or historical reality and they are already a source of friction among states in the region. Helping to resolve each set of these problems offers the U.S. and other Western states levers of influence.

Gobel's categories are a useful framework in which to consider some elements of a longer term U.S. strategy toward Eurasia, one geared to creating conditions of stability. The following are some thoughts of what the broad shape of that strategy might be.

Internal Reform

Russia, Ukraine and the other successor states need western technical assistance to meet the problems inherited from the old Soviet system and to create the political and economic infrastructure of a modern state. We already have experience in providing such support to the newly reforming states of Eastern Europe. While Eurasia's problems are similar in kind to those of Eastern Europe, they far exceed them in degree. Adopting a technical assistance program for Eurasia would therefore entail substantial costs, but this commitment of resources would be a small fraction of the expense of sustaining the Cold War.

A political consensus between the Administration and Congress on an

Eurasian assistance program has been slow to coalesce. The election year environment and a general conviction that domestic needs should take priority has delayed the process. These attitudes now appear to be changing.

So far much of the assistance debate has focussed on the size of an economic package for Russia, and potentially others states should they adopt similarly bold reforms. A multilateral effort that addresses the economic problems of these societies would, if successful, remove a key stimulus to hyper-nationalism: economic hardship and dislocation. The IMF and IBRD have an important role to play in providing the resources for economic restructuring and balance of payments support to permit a move to currency convertibility. A stabilization fund for the ruble is also under consideration. The components of such an economic package are not dissimilar to those already assembled for Poland. It is the enormity of the resources required to meet Russian and others needs that is exceptional.

While economic assistance is important, we should not overlook the political, democratic-institution building aspects of such a program. These offer the means of containing nationalism's excesses and channeling its energy in constructive directions. "Popular front" governments are now in power in Russia and Ukraine. There is little in the nature of a democratic infrastructure beneath these elected leaders. The fronts have been successful at mobilizing popular opinion to resist the August coup and to pursue

national independence. They are not equipped to deal with an environment in which there are multiple political groupings and a variety of issues associated with reform which will alienate some segments of society.

Inexperienced political elites in this situation are likely to make exaggerated promises and, in the face of opposition, to fall back on xenophobia and negative aspects of nationalism to win popular support (10). This danger already is presenting itself in Yeltsin's promises to solve the military's housing shortages in six months time and in the posturing of both sides in the Crimea dispute.

The political frailty of Eurasia's governments will complicate our efforts at extending assistance but it can be counteracted by efforts to institutionalize democracy in these societies. Experience in Eastern Europe has shown that programs emphasizing the rule of law, political party building, and inter-ethnic relations contribute to political stability. USIA and other organizations can bring new national elites together in exchanges and conferences to break down stereotypes and confront the seamier sides of nationalism.

Regional Relations

As this essay is written it seems increasingly unlikely that the Commonwealth of Independent States will survive or serve as more

than a transitional arrangement to divide up the military, economic and political assets of the Soviet empire. While it appears that all of the successor states have some interest in coordinating policies, it is not clear whether they wish to do so as a collective unit. The Ukraine for one appears to want to deal bilaterally and on terms of parity with Russia on many of these issues. Others, particularly the Central Asian states, may be more inclined to accept Russia's lead.

While a strong case could be made that cooperation among these new states is desirable, the U.S. should not be seen to coax them back into old patterns of economic dependence or security relations. The successor states will have to sort these arrangements out among themselves. We do have a legitimate interest in seeing that whatever arrangements are worked out respect the arms control and security commitments of the former Soviet Union as well as those human rights and other obligations assumed by the new states themselves as members of the CSCE. The Bush administration has made such concerns a basis for recognition and diplomatic relations.

The West can offer incentives to encourage cooperative solutions to the common problems of these states. A technical assistance program, for example, could place a priority on funding regional projects worked by two or more of the successor states. Areas such as energy, trade and the environment lend themselves to regional, as opposed to purely national, approaches.

A degree of economic integration would appear logical in view of the centralized, command economy all have inherited. The Ukraine now seems intent, however, on establishing its own national currency and central bank as outward signs of sovereignty. Other states will follow suit. The disruptive impact of these steps on regional trade could be mitigated by a move to full convertibility, something unlikely to occur in the near term, or the creation of a payments union to smooth trade flows. Based on Western Europe's experience in the immediate post-war period, the U.S. and its allies could provide the technical assistance and initial funding to start up such a trade clearing system.

The strongest incentive for cooperation, however, will be that it improves their chances for eventual membership in that select set of western economic and political institutions identified with having made it into the industrialized world: the OECD, NATO and the EC. Membership in more universal bodies such as the IMF, the World Bank and GATT is something which we can encourage them to pursue now and which will expose them to peer pressure and financial and trade policy discipline that will promote Western investment. But, in their eyes, these will be no substitute for the prestige associated with participation in the First World's most exclusive clubs and we should not discourage them from aspiring to them. The possibilities should be tightly linked, however, to democratic government, market-oriented economic policies and a level of development consistent with membership in such bodies. The practical impact of this linkage will be to limit

the potential for membership to the more western parts of the former Soviet Union and to Russia itself.

Borders

Territorial disputes have been a principal source of conflict between states. There is a temptation at present to ignore the irrationality of Eurasia's current borders, perhaps in the hope that this issue will be overlooked in the press of other problems. This was Gorbachev's advice as he sought to negotiate a new Union Treaty before the August coup. The reality, however, is that borders without an historical and ethnic rational produce friction and even conflict. Internal borders within the Soviet Union were, in fact, regularly altered, usually at the central direction of Moscow. People in the region are aware of this and of the arbitrariness of many of their new frontiers.

The dispute over Khrushchev's award of Crimea to the Ukraine in 1954 has received attention due to Russia and Ukraine's haggling over disposition of the Black Sea Fleet. It is not unique. Fighting between Armenians and Azerbaijanis over the Nagorno-Karabak has been going on since before the Soviet Union dissolved. Among the other territorial disputes likely to come to the fore are Kaliningrad, a ethnically-mixed enclave of the Russian Federation, wedged between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic Sea and now discreetly claimed by both. The republic of Moldovo, seized by Stalin at the start of Second World War, is also a trouble spot.

Its population is largely ethnic Romanian and may eventually opt for some form of union with Bucharest. Western regions in the republic are populated by Slavs and have already declared autonomy and will resist any transfer. Perhaps the most sensitive territorial issues involve the western Ukraine and northern Kazakhstan. Both, like the Crimea, are ethnically Russian and a source for future irredentist feeling in Moscow.

The U.S. has no interest in encouraging such territorial claims. But if these disputes arise, as seems likely, Eurasia's new states will not accept verbal arguments that they suppress their claims in the interest of regional stability. We should be looking now to mechanisms that can resolve these disputes without conflict. The CSCE Helsinki document provides for territorial changes among its signatories so long as such changes are negotiated by peaceful means. As yet, the CSCE has no formal mechanism for resolving conflicting territorial claims, though it has taken a step in defining such a role for itself by sending a fact-finding team to Nagorno-Karabakh. We should now be exploring ways of formalizing a role for the CSCE in such situations.

CONCLUSION

The U.S. holds tremendous prestige in the eyes of the peoples of Eurasia. Our readiness to recognize new regimes and engage them in dialogue extends considerable legitimacy to their leaders. Our

actual influence on events on the ground will remain limited, but we can maximize our leverage by acting collectively with our allies. We need to exercise this influence in a sensitive way so as not to excite fears that foreigners are taking advantage of these new states or "laughing" at their plight.

From where we stand at the end of one era, it is difficult to foresee the shape of Eurasia's future. Nationalism will be an important dynamic in the region's development, however. We need to factor this force into our policy calculations and, as this paper argues, to seek ways to influence it in positive directions. In doing so, we must avoid becoming overly fixed on a status quo in Eurasia inherited from another era and holding little legitimacy for the region's new states.

NOTES

1. Throughout this paper, the term "Eurasia" is used to refer to the territory of the former Soviet Union. The author chose this as a convenient shorthand for referring collectively to the fifteen successor states of the old union.

2. This latter scenario now seems improbable but great political upheavals of the past have seen societies experience a period of introversion and internal discord followed by reaction and external projections of power. Both the Russian and French Revolutions come to mind in this regard.

3. Washington Post, August 2,1991. First Section, A1. Final Edition. (The President made his speech a day earlier in Kiev, Ukraine where he also sought to convince Ukrainians that they should support Gorbachev's Union Treaty.)

4. Nationalism is a relatively recent invention. The German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder is credited with having first articulated the concept in the early 19 th century. He did so in reaction to the universalist philosophy of the Enlightenment, which had been spread by Napoleon's armies throughout Europe. Essentially, Herder argued, each people was unique and important, possessing a collective spirit (Volksgeist) which was embodied in its language, customs, institutions and culture. The nation state was the political expression of this spirit. Herder's was a benign view of nationalism in which different and distinct nationalities could co-exist. Herder's ideas formed the basis of the nationalist revivals of Central and Eastern Europe in the late 19 th and early 20 th century. Herder's view of nationalism permeates the thinking of latterday nationalists in Eastern Europe, the Baltic states, and increasingly in Ukraine and Russia itself.

5. French sociologist Alaine Touraine makes this point in his work, Return of the Actor: Social theory in Postindustrial Society (trans. by Myrna Godzich, Minneapoliis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 1988.) Touraine draws a parallel between the rise of Solidarity and national consciousness in Poland and links them to a sense of retaking the future into popular hands.

6. The following is a list of ten of the Soviet successor states with the percentage of each titular nationality as a share of the new state's population: Russia (81.5 percent), Ukraine (72.7 percent), Byelorus (77.9 percent), Moldovo (64.5 percent), Armenia (93.3 percent), Georgia (70.1 percent), Azerbaijan (82.7 percent), Uzbekistan (71.4 percent), Tajikistan (62.3 percent), Kirghizstan (52.4 percent), Kazakhstan (39.7 percent) and Turkmenistan (72 percent). Note that the percentages for Central Asia are generally lower, reflecting the greater ethnic diversity in this region. In fact, national politics in these states has a more tribal than nationalist aspect similar to the situation in post-colonial

Africa.

7. Some observers have explained this subdued national consciousness in terms of a mind set inherited from former Soviet days. Russians up till now have viewed view themselves as the dominant ethnic community, not just in their homeland but throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union. The existence of the Commonwealth of Independent States allowed them to preserve this image for a time and to delay thinking of themselves in nationalist terms. This idea has been best articulated by former State Department Advisor on nationalities, Paul Gobel. Gobel is now a Senior Advisor with the Carnegie Endowment. One of his recent publications is cited below.

8. Medvedev, Zhores. **Washington Post**, January 12,1992, Outlook Section. C1, Final Edition

9. Gobel, Paul. "Forget the Soviet Union," Foreign Affairs, Spring/Summer, 1992.

10. Mandelbaum, Michael, ed. The Rise of Nations in the Soviet Union: American Foreign Policy and the Disintegration of the USSR. Council For Foreign Relations, 1991.